or four days later, he told me that the original of the "Hale. Blue" might still be found at Cooper Ranch on the windward side of Oahu. I don't know how long you have had hibiscus holes in your head, but if the trouble is long standing with you, Cooper Ranch will be remembered by you as a very early sourse of hibiscus in Hawaii. It was the home of Mr. & Mrs. Will Cooper. Mr. Cooper was a newspaperman, as I understand it, and Mrs. Cooper was the hibiscus headman. They had an extremely large collection, brought from all parts of the world, and also developed quite a few of their own seedlings. According to the late Norman Reasoner, his father secured some of his early scion wood imports from the Coopers, as did your beloved Jim Hendry. But like most hibiscus programs in the World War I days, this project was abandoned, and little work was done after Mrs. Cooper's death, in the 1920's, as I recall. When I resided in Hawaii in 1934-36, the place was maintained as a guest ranch, and the hibiscus plantings were cared for. However, during World War II, Cooper Ranch was a rest home for WACS, and only the dooryard plants were kept up.

So I made the trip around the Island and found that the place was in the hands of a caretaker. He was not able to locate the plant of "Hale. Blue", but allowed me to look around under the guava and other jungle growth. After some time, I found the plant, and in this case, it was only a plant, not over four feet high, but very old. It had seeded, and I was able to

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get seed and wood. This wood is the origin of my present stock of the variety. I also bloomed the seed, and again it came true to type, so I think we may assume it is a true species, although we perhaps should consult the experts on this.

That's not the end of the story; if you are not already bored to tears, read on:

Last year, Dr. Donald Egolf, of the National Arboretum, wrote many of us in the Society for assistance in a project, which I understand, has as one objective the crossing of H. Syriacus and H. Rosa Sinensis. He asked for cuttings of good "breeders", and among others, I sent him "Hale. Blue" as I felt that because the pollen characteristics of the variety (a very light ivory color) and because it appeared to be a true species, it might prove of use to him in his work.

Then, last November, when visiting Hawaii, I told Paul Weissich, Director of Botanic Gardens about the variety, as well as other "oldies" at Cooper Ranch, and he asked me to accompany him to the Ranch, to secure wood of this variety as well as other old varieties. We were very lucky; the place had been sold, we were told by the caretaker, and the bulldozers were moving in the next day to clear out the undergrowth. By cutting our way through the guava and other growth of many hears standing, we were not only able to get wood of the original "Hale. Blue", but of about 25 other older varieties. These were rooted and grafted and, as I understand it, planted in a special section of the Hibiscus garden at Kapiolani Park, Honolulu. I brought back several for my own use, as these older varieties have very strong roots, a character that I like to breed into my seedlings.

Sincerely,
Ross Gast

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A PLUTOCRAT is a guy
Who can get a haircut
The day before payday.